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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BEIJING 10642

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: PRO-DEMOCRACY DEMONSTRATORS FLOOD TIANANMEN
SQUARE IN SECOND NIGHT OF DEMONSTRATIONS

[1](#)1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

[1](#)2. SUMMARY: THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS FROM BEIJING
UNIVERSITIES FLOODED TIANANMEN SQUARE IN CENTRAL
BEIJING FOR A SECOND NIGHT ON APRIL 18. THEY CROWDED
AROUND THE BASE OF THE MARTYRS MONUMENT AT THE CENTER
OF THE SQUARE CHANTING PRO-DEMOCRACY SLOGANS AND
SINGING PATRIOTIC SONGS. TEN TO FIFTEEN THOUSAND
PEACEFUL BUT SYMPATHETIC ONLOOKERS SURROUNDED THE
CORE OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS. LATE IN THE EVENING
BETWEEN TWO AND THREE THOUSAND STUDENTS MARCHED TO
THE ZHONGNANHAI LEADERSHIP COMPOUND SEVERAL BLOCKS
FROM THE SQUARE AND SAT AT THE GATE. ALTHOUGH POLOFF
AT THE SQUARE WITNESSED NO VIOLENCE, THE XINHUA NEWS
AGENCY REPORTED ON APRIL 19 THAT A POLICE OFFICER
SUSTAINED A MINOR INJURY WHEN A SMALL NUMBER OF
STUDENTS ATTEMPTED TO FORCE THEIR WAY INTO
ZHONGNANHAI IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS.
DEMONSTRATORS AT ZHONGNANHAI REPORTEDLY DISPERSED
BETWEEN 4:00 AM AND 5:00 AM ON THE MORNING OF
APRIL 19. NO ARRESTS HAVE BEEN REPORTED.

[1](#)3. LAST NIGHT'S DEMONSTRATION WAS AMONG THE LARGEST
UNOFFICIAL GATHERINGS AT THE SQUARE SINCE HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS OF BEIJINGERS FLOODED TIANANMEN TO
COMMEMORATE THE DEATH OF ZHOU ENLAI AND PROTEST THE
GANG OF FOUR IN APRIL, 1976. TIANANMEN WAS ALSO THE
SCENE OF PRO-DEMOCRACY STUDENT GATHERINGS IN LATE
1985 AND LATE 1986. A STUDENT ATTEMPT TO DEMONSTRATE
THERE FIZZLED IN MID-1988. THIS TIME STUDENTS
APPEARED BETTER ORGANIZED THAN IN THE PAST, AS
EVIDENCED BY THE PREVALENCE OF STUDENTS WEARING DARK
MOURNING CLOTHES, COORDINATION OF THE ZHONGNANHAI
MARCH, AND SLOGANS APPARENTLY AGREED UPON IN ADVANCE.

[1](#)4. THE DEATH OF POLITBURO MEMBER AND OUSTED PARTY
SECRETARY GENERAL HU YAOBANG PROVIDED DISCONTENTED
STUDENTS WITH A CONVENIENT PRETEXT FOR DEMONSTRATING.
THAT STUDENTS WERE ALLOWED TO GATHER AT THEIR
UNIVERSITIES TO ORGANIZE THE DEMONSTRATION AS WELL AS
THE SURPRISINGLY LIGHT POLICE PRESENCE AT TIANANMEN
SUGGEST THAT THE AUTHORITIES WILL TOLERATE STUDENT
SENTIMENT FOR THE MOMENT. AN OFFICIAL MOURNING
CEREMONY FOR HU YAOBANG IS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 22.
AUTHORITIES MAY WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE CEREMONY BEFORE
MOVING TO STOP THE DEMONSTRATIONS. LIKE ITS
PREDECESSORS, THIS OUTPOURING MAY VERY WELL INTENSIFY
PRESENT LEADERSHIP DEBATES OVER POLICY AND PERSONNEL
ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

THE CROWD AT TIANANMEN

[1](#)5. THE APRIL 15 DEATH OF FORMER PARTY GENERAL
SECRETARY HU YAOBANG CONTINUES GENERATE STUDENT
ACTIVITY ON BEIJING CAMPUSES AND AT TIANANMEN
SQUARE. ON APRIL 18, A CORE CADRE OF STUDENTS SPENT

THE ENTIRE DAY AT THE MARTYRS MONUMENT, A TALL STELA AT THE HEART OF TIANANMEN SQUARE. THEY WERE JOINED IN THE EARLY EVENING BY OTHER STUDENTS FROM BEIJING, QINGHUA, AND PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITIES. POLOFF PRESENT AT TIANANMEN ALSO SAW STUDENTS FROM THE BEIJING ENGINEERING UNIVERSITY ARRIVE AT THE SQUARE AT ABOUT 9:00 PM. AT 9:30 PM STUDENTS THAT HAD PACKED SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER AT THE BASE OF THE MONUMENT NUMBERED BETWEEN TWO AND THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE. A PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY STUDENT TOLD POLOFF THAT THE STUDENTS FROM HIS SCHOOL ALONE NUMBERED OVER 1700.

16. MOST DEMONSTRATORS AT THE MONUMENT WORE DARK CLOTHES OF MOURNING. THEY CHANTED SUCH SLOGANS AS "LONG LIVE DEMOCRACY" AND "OPPOSE OFFICIAL CORRUPTION." AT ONE POINT STUDENTS WHO HAD CLIMBED THE MONUMENT'S PEDIMENT RAISED A BANNER STATING "OVERTHROW AUTOCRATIC BUREAUCRACY." AT THE CENTER OF THE MONUMENT FLEW A THIRTY FOOT BANNER RAISED BY BEIJING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WHICH STATED "ALWAYS REMEMBER COMRADE HU YAOBANG." AT THE BANNER'S CENTER STUDENTS HAD PAINTED THREE LARGE CHARACTERS FOR THE PHRASE "CHINA'S SPIRIT" (ZHONGGUO HUN). DEMONSTRATORS ALSO ENTHUSIASTICALLY SANG PATRIOTIC SONGS SUCH AS THE "INTERNATIONALE."

17. BETWEEN 10 AND 15 THOUSAND CURIOUS BEIJINGERS OF ALL AGES AND ALL OCCUPATIONS THROGGED THE SQUARE SURROUNDING THE STELA. THE ONLOOKERS WERE PEACEFUL BUT APPEARED LARGELY SYMPATHETIC TO THE STUDENTS. THEY CHEERED EACH TIME A STUDENT CLIMBED THE MONUMENT'S HIGH PEDIMENT TO PLACE A MOURNING WREATH OR A BANNER. ON OCCASION, A LARGE NUMBER OF THE ONLOOKERS CLAPPED OR SHOUTED IN APPROVAL OF THE PRO-DEMOCRACY SLOGANS CHANTED BY THE DEMONSTRATORS. SMALL GROUPS OF YOUTHS AND OTHERS GATHERED IN TIGHT HUDDLES AROUND THE SQUARE TO DISCUSS POLITICS. POLOFF WITNESSED A CROWD GATHER SPONTANEOUSLY AROUND A MIDDLE AGED MAN WHO BEGAN TO DISCUSS WITH HIS FRIEND THE PROS AND CONS OF THE STUDENTS' ACTIONS.

THE MARCH TO ZHONGNANHAI

18. AT 9:45 PM A CROWD OF BETWEEN 500 TO ONE THOUSAND DEMONSTRATORS CARRYING A WREATH DESCENDED FROM THE BASE OF THE MONUMENT AND PROCEEDED NORTH THROUGH THE SQUARE TO CHANGAN AVENUE, BEIJING'S MAIN THOROUGHFARE. FOLLOWED BY A HUGE NUMBER OF ONLOOKERS, THEY TURNED TO MEET A PARADE OF BETWEEN ONE AND TWO THOUSAND STUDENTS WHO HAD JUST ARRIVED AT THE SQUARE FROM THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT IN BEIJING'S NORTHWEST SUBURBS, A TWO TO THREE HOUR MARCH AWAY. THE MARCHERS, WHO APPEARED TO HAIL MOSTLY FROM BEIJING AND QINGHUA UNIVERSITIES, CARRIED ANOTHER WREATH AND A LARGE PRO-DEMOCRACY BANNER. THE COMBINED CROWD MARCHED ONCE AROUND THE PERIMETER OF THE SQUARE AND HEADED FOR THE XINHUA GATE, THE SOUTH ENTRANCE TO THE ZHONGNANHAI LEADERSHIP COMPOUND. (NOTE: A WESTERN REPORTER ESTIMATED THE SIZE OF THE MARCH AT 4 THOUSAND PEOPLE, BUT THIS IS ON THE HIGH END OF THE SCALE. TWO TO THREE THOUSAND SEEMS MORE LIKE IT. END NOTE.)

19. REACHING ZHONGNANHAI AT ABOUT 10:45 PM, THE LEAD MARCHERS PLACED TWO OR THREE WREATHS HONORING HU YAOBANG BEFORE THE DOORS OF THE GATE. THEY THEN SAT DOWN TO CHANT SLOGANS AND SING. SEVERAL THOUSAND ONLOOKERS CROWDED THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE AVENUE AS LATE NIGHT TRAFFIC IN THE AREA GROUND TO A HALT. AS OF POLOFF'S DEPARTURE FROM THE SCENE AT 11:45 PM, THE CROWD AT THE GATE HAD CONFINED ITSELF TO VERBAL DISPLAYS OF ITS SYMPATHIES. HOWEVER, AN APRIL 19 NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY (XINHUA) RELEASE REPORTED THAT AT 12:20 AM "A SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE" HOLDING WREATHS WERE STOPPED BY GUARDS AS THEY ATTEMPTED TO ENTER THE GATE. THERE WERE THREE SUCH ATTEMPTS, ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE. THE STORY ALSO STATED THAT ONE GUARD

WAS LIGHTLY INJURED WHEN SOME DEMONSTRATORS BEGAN THROWING BOTTLES AND SHOES.

¶10. AT 4:20 AM ON WEDNESDAY, LOUDSPEAKERS IN THE AREA BROADCAST A BEIJING CITY GOVERNMENT NOTICE URGING MARCHERS TO RETURN HOME, ACCORDING TO THE XINHUA STORY. THE ARTICLE QUOTES THE NOTICE AS STATING THAT "IT IS ILLEGAL AND IMPERMISSIBLE TO BREAK INTO PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ORGANS." THE ARTICLE REPORTED THAT BETWEEN THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND ABOUT 5:00 AM, THE CROWD DISPERSED AND ORDER IN THE AREA HAD BEEN RESTORED. WE BELIEVE THAT A CORE GROUP OF STUDENTS REMAINED AT THE MONUMENT THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT. WE HAVE JUST HEARD REPORTS THAT AS OF MID-DAY APRIL 19, SEVERAL THOUSAND STUDENTS REMAIN IN TIANANMEN.

POLICE PRESENCE DISCREET

¶11. SURPRISINGLY, UNIFORMED POLICE WERE ALMOST ENTIRELY ABSENT FROM TIANANMEN SQUARE ITSELF THROUGHOUT THE EVENING'S FESTIVITIES. HOWEVER, JUDGING FROM THE NUMBER OF OFFICIAL VEHICLES PARKED IN FRONT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MUSEUM WHICH FLANKS THE EAST SIDE OF THE SQUARE, A LARGE CONTINGENT OF PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICERS MAY HAVE GARRISONED THE MUSEUM'S SPACIOUS INTERIOR COURTYARD. UNARMED POLICE ON THE STREETS SURROUNDING TIANANMEN SQUARE MAINTAINED A FORCE LEVEL SUFFICIENT ONLY TO DIRECT TRAFFIC. MORE PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICERS, AGAIN UNARMED, CIRCLED THE CROWD OF DEMONSTRATORS AS THEY SAT BEFORE THE GATE AT ZHONGNANHAI, BUT THEIR NUMBERS REMAINED INSUFFICIENT TO CONTROL DEMONSTRATORS IN THE EVENT OF VIOLENCE. POLOFF WITNESSED NO OVERT FRICTION BETWEEN DEMONSTRATORS AND POLICE THROUGHOUT HIS STAY ON THE SQUARE. POLOFF ALSO SAW NO ARRESTS. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, NO ARRESTS HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY THE PRESS.

STUDENTS SHOW IMPROVED ORGANIZATION

¶12. WE BELIEVE THAT THE APRIL 18 DEMONSTRATION TO HAVE BEEN AMONG THE LARGEST UNOFFICIAL GATHERINGS AT TIANANMEN SINCE THE APRIL, 1976 RIOTS, WHEN BEIJINGERS FLOODED THE CITY'S CENTRAL SQUARE TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR DECEASED PREMIER ZHOU ENLAI'S POLICIES. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED AT TIANANMEN IN SEPTEMBER, 1985 AND AGAIN IN DECEMBER, 1986. IN JUNE, 1988 HUNDREDS OF POLICE SUCCESSFULLY CORDONED OFF THE SQUARE TO PREVENT PRO-DEMOCRACY BEIJING UNIVERSITY DEMONSTRATORS FROM GATHERING.

¶13. LAST NIGHT THE STUDENTS DISPLAYED A DEGREE OF ORGANIZATION HIGHER THAN IN PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS. HUNDREDS OF DEMONSTRATORS CROWDING THE MONUMENT FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOLS ALL WORE DARK CLOTHING. STUDENTS SEEM TO HAVE AGREED THAT THEIR SLOGANS SHOULD REMAIN GENERAL AND NOT DIRECTLY STRIKE AT THE PARTY OR AT INDIVIDUAL LEADERS. IT APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT THE MARCHERS WHO ARRIVED AT THE SQUARE LATE IN THE EVENING TO LINK UP WITH THEIR CLASSMATES ALREADY THERE COULD NOT HAVE PARADED AROUND THE SQUARE AND HEADED FOR ZHONGNANHAI SMOOTHLY WITHOUT PRIOR PLANNING.

WHY NOW?

¶14. THIS AND PAST DEMONSTRATIONS SUGGEST THAT STUDENT FRUSTRATION WITH LEADERSHIP POLITICAL RIGIDITY AND WITH THEIR OWN LOW PROSPECTS AND STANDARD OF LIVING RUNS DEEP. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THEY WILL SCRIBBLE MORDANTLY CRITICAL BIG CHARACTER POSTERS AND THREATEN TO DEMONSTRATE WHENEVER GIVEN THE CHANCE. LAST YEAR, BEIJING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS NEARLY TOOK TO THE STREETS AFTER A GANG OF DELINQUENTS MURDERED A GRADUATE STUDENT IN A SCUFFLE OFF CAMPUS. THIS YEAR, DISCONTENT HAD ALREADY MADE ITSELF FELT DURING THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED NPC, WHEN BEIJING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TACKED UP PRO-DEMOCRACY

POSTERS AND HELD UNAUTHORIZED POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS
ON CAMPUS.

¶15. THE DEATH OF HU YAOBANG, WHO WAS WIDELY THOUGHT
TO HAVE CHAMPIONED DEMOCRATIC REFORMS AS WELL AS
INTELLECTUAL AND STUDENT CAUSES, HAS PROVIDED
STUDENTS WITH A CONVENIENT PRETEXT FOR ACTION.
STUDENT GRIEF OVER HU'S PASSING HAS BEEN EVIDENT AND
SINCERE. BUT A STRONG DESIRE TO SEE SPEEDIER
DEMOCRATIC REFORMS AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THEIR OWN
SITUATIONS LIES AT THE BASE OF THESE CURRENT
DEMONSTRATIONS. PRO-DEMOCRACY SLOGANS FAR OUTNUMBER
STUDENTS' VOCAL EXPRESSIONS OF GRIEF FOR THE FALLEN
POLITBURO MEMBER. THE KNOTS OF PEOPLE ABOUT THE
SQUARE WERE TALKING POLITICS, NOT EXCHANGING HU
YAOBANG REMINISCENCES.

WHAT'S THE PARTY TO DO?

¶16. WE BELIEVE THAT THE LEADERSHIP HAS AT LEAST
TACITLY DECIDED TO ALLOW STUDENTS TO BLOW OFF STEAM
AT THE SQUARE AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT TURN VIOLENT, DO
NOT DIRECTLY ATTACK THE PARTY, AND GATHER OSTENSIBLY
TO MOURN HU YAOBANG. WE UNDERSTAND THAT BEIJING
UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN UNDER PARTICULARLY TIGHT CONTROL
BY SECURITY ORGANS SINCE THE 1985 DEMONSTRATIONS.
OFFICIAL INTIMIDATION OF WOULD BE DEMONSTRATORS
APPEARS TO HAVE GREATLY HINDERED STUDENT ORGANIZING
SINCE THEN. THAT BEIJING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARE OUT
IN FORCE THIS TIME INDICATES TO US THAT UNIVERSITY
OFFICIALS AND SECURITY ORGANS MAY HAVE BEEN TOLD TO
PLAY IT COOL. LIGHT POLICE PRESENCE ON THE SQUARE
ALSO SUGGESTS LEADERSHIP TOLERANCE OF THE
DEMONSTRATIONS FOR THE TIME BEING.

¶17. THE LEADERSHIP MAY BE HOPING THAT THE FRENETIC
STUDENTS, MANY OF WHOM APPEAR TO HAVE CAMPED OUT ON
TIANANMEN FOR THREE DAYS NOW, MAY SIMPLY TIRE OUT AND
CALL IT QUILTS. THE AUTHORITIES HAVE DECIDED TO HOLD
AN OFFICIAL MEMORIAL CEREMONY FOR HU YAOBANG ON
SATURDAY, APRIL 22. THIS WOULD BE THE LOGICAL DATE
BEYOND WHICH LEADERS COULD CEASE TO TOLERATE STUDENT
ACTIVISM. THEY WOULD PROBABLY THEN CLAIM THAT THE
LEGITIMATE MOURNING PERIOD FOR HU HAD FINISHED AND
THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR FURTHER ACTIVITIES. THE
PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY STUDENT TOLD POLOFF THAT HE
THOUGHT STUDENTS WOULD GATHER AT THE SQUARE UNTIL THE
MEMORIAL CEREMONY.

¶18. HOWEVER THE PARTY SEEKS PUBLICLY TO CHARACTERIZE
THE ACTIVITIES THAT HAVE SO FAR CULMINATED IN THE
APRIL 18 DEMONSTRATION, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE STUDENTS
ARE VOICING SENTIMENTS ABOUT HU YAOBANG, THE
AUTOCRATIC BUREAUCRACY, AND INCREASED OFFICIAL
CORRUPTION THAT MANY REGULAR BEIJING CITIZENS SEEM TO
SHARE AT LEAST QUIETLY. LIKE ITS PREDECESSORS, THIS
OUTPOURING MAY VERY WELL INTENSIFY PRESENT LEADERSHIP
DEBATES OVER POLICY AND PERSONNEL ISSUES.

LORD